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Nixon-era actions are still following Mitchell

By Leslie Phillips
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WASHINGTON — John Mitchell's name surfaced again in Supreme Court Wednesday — this time in a request for legal immunity from a wiretap he authorized 15 years ago.

The former attorney general — represented by a Justice Department lawyer — is fighting a claim that he is liable for

damages resulting from wiretaps of Vietnam protesters.

A ruling is expected in July.

Mitchell has been maintaining a low profile in Washington, where he was forced to resign during the Watergate scandal.

Disbarred after a 1975 trial for obstruction of justice, he now works for an international business consulting firm.

"He's kind of a detached fellow about most everything — including even himself," says

Bryce Harlow, a colleague at the Nixon White House.

"He's sort of a private guy who does his thing and doesn't care a whole lot what people think of him."

One acquaintance recalls that at a recent dinner party with former Nixon aides, Mitchell joined in poking fun at former White House aide John Ehrlichman. He then urged guests to read a new Watergate book suggesting extensive CIA

involvement in the scandal.

Mitchell, who served 19 months in an Alabama military prison, recently received \$68,579 from former President Nixon's 1972 campaign re-election committee to cover legal expenses incurred during the Watergate scandal.

He's one of the few Watergate principles not to write a book, despite signing a 1975 book contract and receiving a \$50,000 advance.